

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

46. (Currently amended) A method comprising:
C1 receiving a signal pulse; and
in response to the signal pulse:
pulling a voltage of a ~~first drain bias circuit~~ sense input node for a non-volatile memory cell to a voltage potential of a voltage source; pulling a voltage of a ~~second drain bias circuit~~ of reference input node for a reference cell to the voltage potential of the voltage source; and shorting a sense node for the non-volatile memory cell to a reference node for the reference cell.
47. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the non-volatile memory cell comprises a flash memory cell.
48. (Currently amended) The method of claim 46, wherein:
pulling the voltage of the ~~first drain bias circuit~~ sense input node to the voltage potential of the voltage source comprises enabling a first kicker device coupled to ~~the a~~ first drain bias circuit for the non-volatile memory cell; and
pulling the voltage of the ~~second drain bias circuit~~ reference input node to the voltage potential of the voltage source comprises enabling a second kicker device coupled to ~~the a~~ second drain bias circuit for the reference cell.

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49. (Original) The method of claim 48, wherein the first kicker device and the second kicker device each comprise a high performance transistor.
 50. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein shorting the sense node to the reference node comprises enabling a semiconductor device coupled between the sense node and the reference node.
 51. (Original) The method of claim 50, wherein enabling the semiconductor device coupled between the sense node and the reference node equalizes a voltage potential of the sense node with a voltage potential of the reference node during bit charging.
 52. (Original) The method of claim 51, further comprising:
pulling the voltage potential of the sense node to the voltage potential of the voltage source minus the voltage across the first drain bias circuit; and
pulling the voltage potential of the reference node to the voltage potential of the voltage source minus the voltage across the second drain bias circuit.
 53. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the signal pulse is received prior to sensing the contents of the non-volatile memory cell.
 54. (Currently amended) The method of claim 46 48, wherein the first drain bias circuit and the second drain bias circuit each comprise a cascode amplifier.
 55. (Currently amended) A non-volatile memory device comprising:
a first kicker device, a first terminal of the first kicker device being coupled to a voltage source and a second terminal of the first kicker device being

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C1

coupled to a first drain bias circuit for a memory cell of the non-volatile memory device;

a second kicker device, a first terminal of the second kicker device being coupled to the voltage source and a second terminal of the second kicker device being coupled to a second drain bias circuit for a reference cell of the non-volatile memory device; and
a semiconductor device, a first terminal of the semiconductor device being coupled to a sense node of the memory cell and a second terminal of the semiconductor device being coupled to a reference node of the reference cell;

in response to a signal pulse:

the first kicker device pulling a voltage of ~~the first drain bias circuit a~~
sense input node for the memory cell to a voltage potential of the voltage source,

the second kicker device pulling a voltage of ~~the second drain bias circuit a~~
reference input node for the reference cell to the voltage potential of the voltage source, and

the semiconductor device shorting the sense node with the reference node.

56. (Original) The non-volatile memory device of claim 55, wherein the non-volatile memory device is a flash memory device.
57. (Original) The non-volatile memory device of claim 55, wherein the signal pulse is received prior to sensing the contents of the memory cell.

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58. (Original) The non-volatile memory device of claim 55, wherein the first kicker device and the second kicker device each comprise a high performance transistor.
 59. (Currently amended) The non-volatile memory device of claim 55, wherein the semiconductor device equalize equalizes a voltage potential of the sense node with a voltage potential of the reference node during bit charging.
 60. (Original) The non-volatile memory device of claim 55, wherein the first drain bias circuit and the second drain bias circuit each comprises a cascode amplifier.
 61. (Currently amended) A flash memory device, comprising:
 - a memory cell array;
 - a reference cell array;
 - a first drain bias circuit for a memory cell in the memory cell array and a second drain bias circuit for a reference cell in the reference cell array;
 - a first kicker device, a first terminal of the first kicker device being coupled to a voltage source and a second terminal of the first kicker device being coupled to the first drain bias circuit;
 - a second kicker device, a first terminal of the second kicker device being coupled to the voltage source and a second terminal of the kicker device being coupled to the second drain bias circuit; and
 - a semiconductor device, a first terminal of the semiconductor device being coupled to a sense node of the memory cell and a second terminal of the semiconductor device being coupled to a reference node of the reference cell;

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upon receiving an enable signal:

- 18 the first kicker device pulling a voltage of ~~the first drain bias circuit a~~
 ~~sense~~
 ~~reference input node for the memory cell~~ to a voltage potential of
 the voltage source,
- 90 the second kicker device pulling a voltage of ~~the second drain bias circuit~~
 ~~reference input node~~ to the voltage potential of the voltage source,
 and
 the semiconductor device shorting the sense node with the reference node.
62. (Original) The flash memory device of claim 61, wherein the enable signal is received prior to sensing the contents of the memory cell.
63. (Original) The flash memory device of claim 61, wherein the first kicker device and the second kicker device each comprises a high performance transistor.
64. (Original) The flash memory device of claim 63, wherein each high performance transistor is a P-channel semiconductor device.
65. (Original) The flash memory device of claim 61, wherein the semiconductor device equalizes a voltage potential of the sense node with a voltage potential of the reference node during bit charging.
66. (Original) The non-volatile memory device of claim 61, wherein the first drain bias circuit and the second drain bias circuit each comprise a cascode amplifier.
67. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

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means for pulling a voltage of a ~~first drain bias circuit~~ sense input node for a non-volatile memory cell to a voltage potential of a voltage source in response to an enable signal;

means for pulling a voltage of a ~~second drain bias circuit~~ reference input node for a reference memory cell to the voltage potential of the voltage source in response to the enable signal; and

means for shorting a sense node of the non-volatile memory cell to a reference node of the reference cell in response to the enable signal.
